



Why Language Attitudes Matter: An evidence based approach

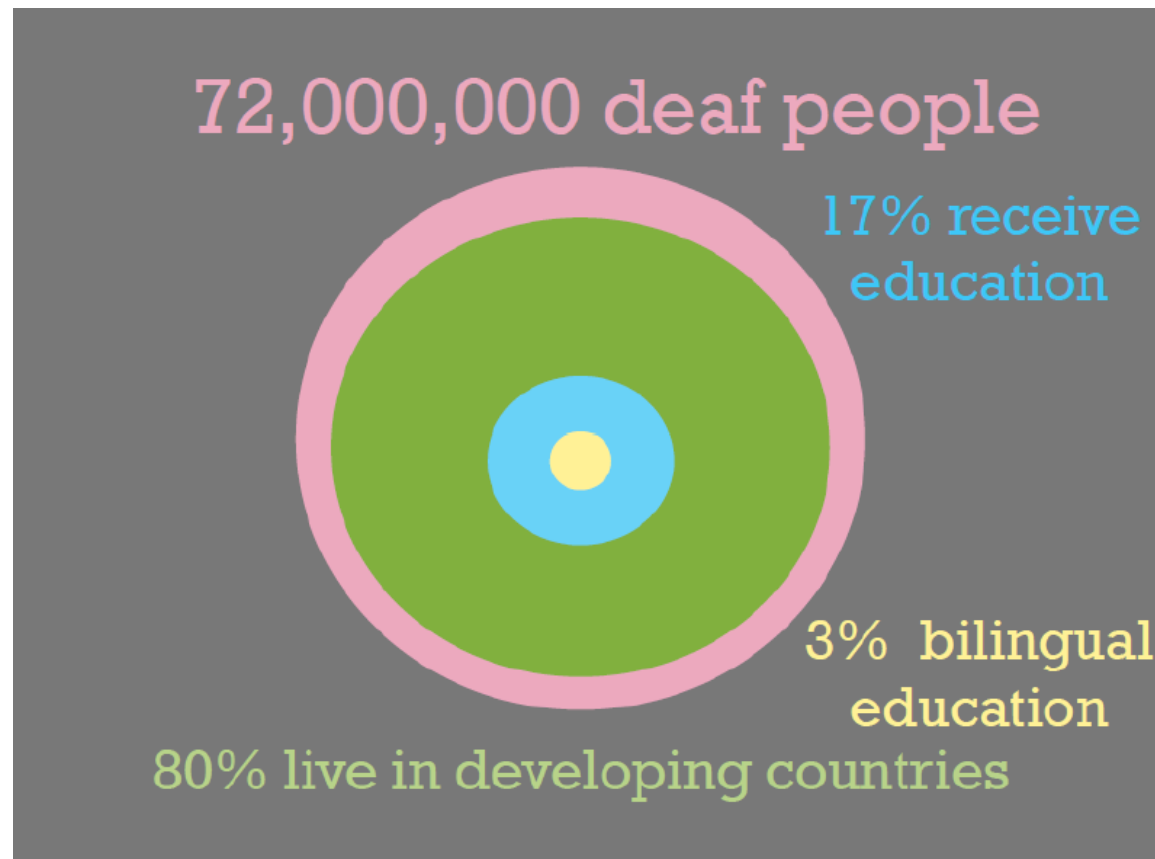


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and Haaris Sheikh

IRAAL - TCD - 21 November 2015



World Federation of the Deaf Figures (2013)



WFD Vision...

- Deaf people have full human rights in an equal world where they and their sign languages are recognised and included as part of human diversity.





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But what happens when your language is not recognised?

Nuacht and News with Signing

BROADCAST TUE 24 SEP 2013 7 Episodes Available

RTÉ One Nuacht and News with Signing Broadcast: 24/09/2013 Share

increase.

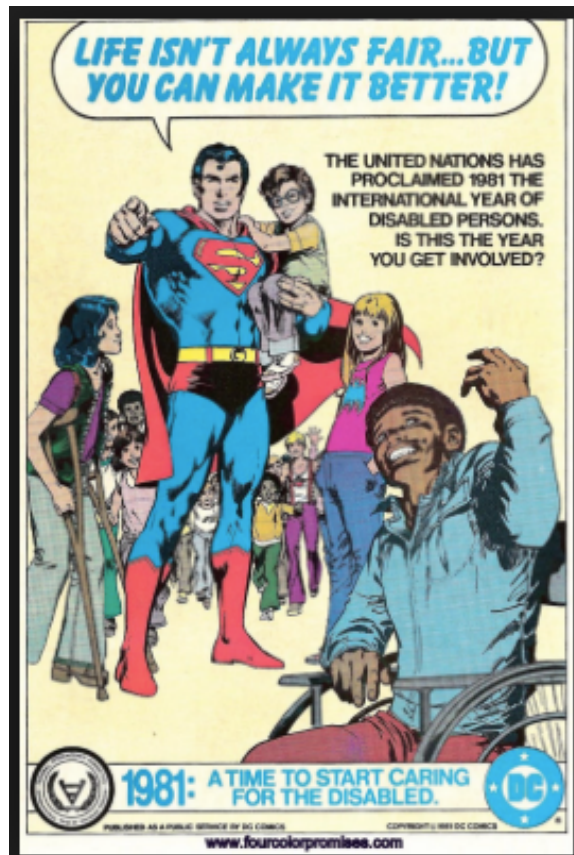
The Irish Deaf Society is outside Leinster

RTÉ NEWS 10:33 / 12:13

A screenshot of a video player interface. The video shows a news anchor in a blue top sitting at a desk. To her left, a large sign is visible with the text 'increase.' followed by a horizontal line and 'The Irish Deaf Society is outside Leinster'. The video player includes a progress bar at the bottom showing 10:33 / 12:13, a volume icon, a signal strength indicator, and an 'AUTO' button. The video title 'Nuacht and News with Signing' is at the top, with 'BROADCAST TUE 24 SEP 2013' and '7 Episodes Available' below it. The channel 'RTÉ One' and broadcast date '24/09/2013' are also visible.

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1981



- International Year of Disabled Persons (UN)
- No national organisation OF deaf people in Ireland (IDS est.1984)
- No European Union of the Deaf yet (1985)
- 1 Deaf teacher (US trained)
- Oralism in schools
- No ISL users in an Irish university
- No ISL classes available yet
- No professional interpreters

Education, Employment, Citizenship

- 1981 - no deaf ISL users at university.
- 2001 - only 81 d/hh students at third level (10% of students with disability population).
- 2011, there were 235 d/hh students (3% of students with disability).
- By 2013, 2 Deaf PhDs (Conama & O'Connell)
- Deaf ISL users still c.10 times less likely to hold a tertiary education qualification than the average Irish person (Leeson, 2012).
- Issues of access - language in education/interpreters/status of SLs & attitudes to SLs
- Deaf people not allowed to serve on juries in many (most?) countries*.



Deaf Community, Education & Employment (2)



- 4 times more likely to be unemployed in a recession (Conroy 1997).
- No surprise: link between poor educational access, employment opportunity and relative poverty (Conroy 1997).



Beyond Social Justice: Power Play?

“Colonisation” of deaf bodies (Ladd) > medical model impacting on education & expectation (Hearing hegemonies) > patriarchy (e.g. gendered distinctions, audism) > educational exclusion > professional gaps (education/access) > conceptual gaps & lexical gaps > underemployment > relative poverty....

Essential to Note: (though you don't need reminding of this!)

- These are NOT natural outcomes of deafness: They are outcomes of archetypical Hearing epistemologies on deafness.



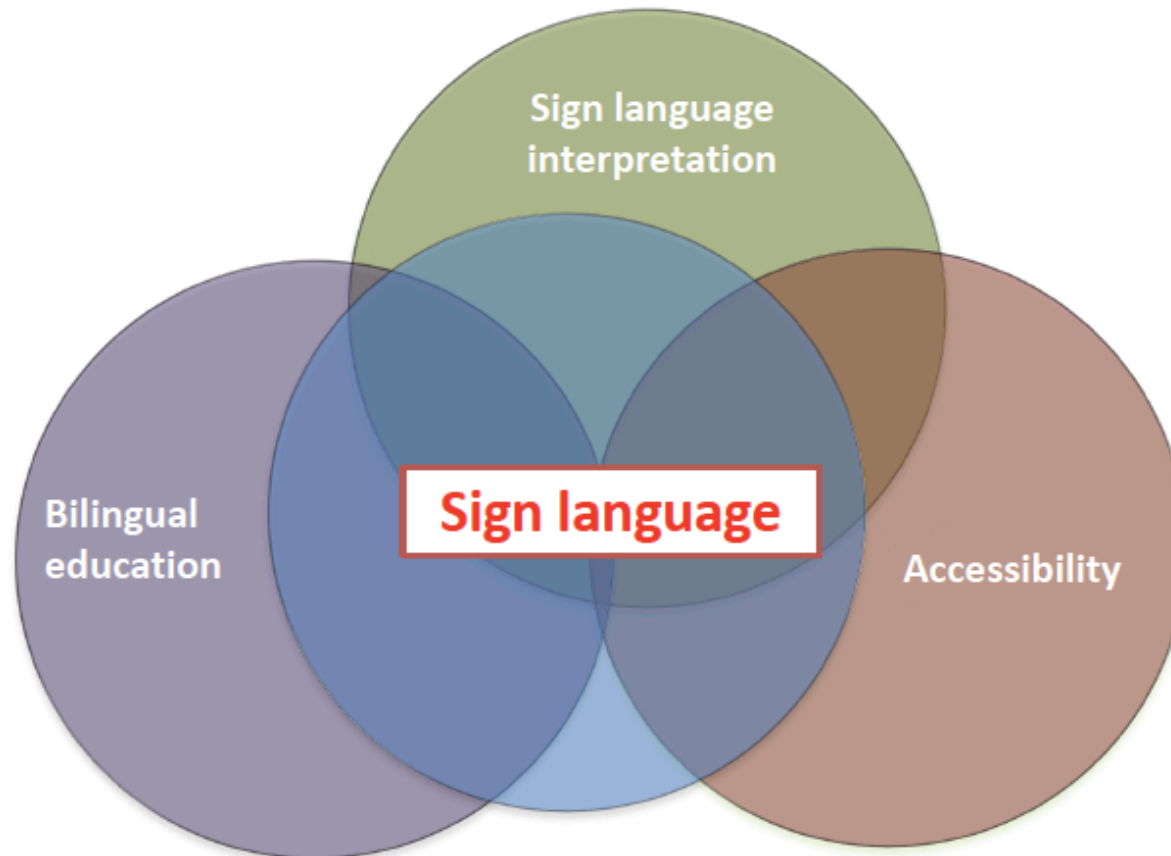
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Basic Factors for Human Rights of Deaf People





Some of our Work & Methods

- ***Irish Government/ Irish based funds***
 - Paul Partnership - focus groups & interviews: interpreters, service providers and Deaf community members (JBC & LL)
 - NCSE - Review of Deaf education (JBC, LL): “listening meetings”, submissions from individuals & organisations.
 - Corpus Linguistics - Signs of Ireland (LL) , Second Language Acquisition Corpus- corpus development, SLAC - EU-wide questionnaire & focus groups.
 - ***European Commission Funded Work***
 - Signall 3 - desk based research (LL, HS)
 - Medisigns - EU wide & Irish questionnaire, focus groups, interviews (LL, HS)
 - Justisigns - EU wide & Irish questionnaire, focus groups, interviews (LL, HS)
 - ***European Centre for Modern Languages -***
 - PRO-Signs I (and II to begin) workshops >> CEFR for SLs
- Other*** -Deaf Leaders (LL) - interviews with 16 leaders in 8 countries



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Why Medisigns?

- Some 900,000 sign language users in the European Union's 27 member states (European Commission).
- Provision of access is hit and miss despite EU equality legislation like the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- European Union's principle of subsidiarity means it has no competence to demand provisions in terms of issues like healthcare/ language policy - these are issues for individual member states to deal with.
- Very little empirical evidence benchmarking current situation and, as a result, no research led training to promote change in the EU.

MEDISIGNS

Irish Horror Stories

- Deaf man prepped for heart surgery: he had a problem with his finger.
- Woman asked if she had had an (MRI) scan. She thought they meant a maternity scan.
- Woman in post-op ward for 3 nights, not sleeping. Why? She was cold.
- Patient had eye drops put in their eyes and then couldn't see or otherwise communicate.
- Deaf patient released from hospital and killed while walking 50 miles home from Galway to Clifden.





WITH: taking shared responsibility



Interpreting works best if we all pull together

- ✓ Just talk normally and use everyday language where possible
- ✓ Don't all talk or sign at once
- ✓ Watch out for each other: notice if things go wrong
- ✓ Use pictures or anything else that helps us explain
- ✓ Take time to make sure we understand each other
- ✓ Ask questions any time we need to
- ✓ Trust each other to take care of what matters



INTERPRETERS ENABLE COMMUNICATION
MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS PROMOTE HEALTH
PATIENTS STAY WELL



European Directives

- **Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation**-right to interpretation at all stages of the procedure (pre-trial, trial), right to translation of essential documents, MS shall bear the costs and ensure the quality.
- **Directive 2012/13/EU on the right to information** - MS shall ensure that the information provided shall be given orally or in writing, in simple and accessible language, taking into account any particular needs of vulnerable suspects or vulnerable accused persons.
- **Directive 2012/29/EU on minimum standards on victims' rights** -applicable as of November 2015



Problems?





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Homeless man jailed for pushing man to his death under bus

Edward Connors (30), who is deaf and cannot speak, gets seven year sentence



Gardai on the scene of the incident on Dawson Street in Dublin on December 6th, 2012.

Topics: [News](#) [Crime & Law](#) [Circuit Court](#) [Edward Connors](#)
[Eoghan Dudley](#) [Patrick Mccartan](#) [Director of Public Prosecutions](#)

Mon, Feb 23, 2015, 13:55

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A homeless heroin addict has been sentenced to seven years in prison for killing an acquaintance by knocking him under a bus in Dublin on December 2012.



TROLLS

- More do-gooder horse crap. Everyone living around Sandyford knows this individual and his carry on for years. He committed two muggings at syringe point while out on bail for this horrific crime, and all I hear about it is the lack of facilities in prison for him. What facilities does he need to sit in a cell or walk around an exercise yard ?
- (Ann O'Reilly, 25/2/2015).



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EFFORT MODEL OF ENGAGEMENT

$$E = COIZ \{FOI + CON + A/C\}^{IC}$$

E = EFFORT

COIZ = CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY ZONE

IC = INTERPRETER CAPACITY

CON = CONTEXT

**A/C = AUTONOMY
CONSTRAINT**

FOI = FUND OF INFORMATION

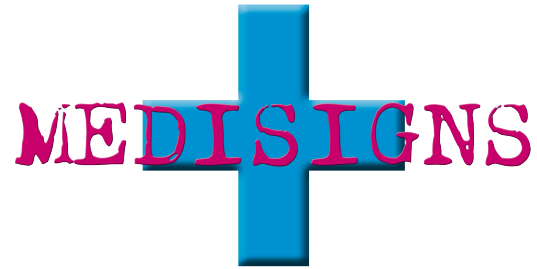
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- “The mother tongue is an aspect of the soul of a people. It is their achievement par excellence. Language is the surest way for individuals to safeguard or recover the authenticity they inherited from their ancestors as well as to hand it on to generations yet unborn” (Fishman, 1989, p. 276).



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For more information

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